

Truths on Sanctification



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TRUTHS ON SANCTIFICATION

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The Need for Sanctification

Man is the crowning feature of the whole creation of God. By the Word of God man was made pure, holy, and righteous, like God himself.

God made man for the express purpose of having some being that would be capable of being receptive to his attributes and responding to them. In God is comprehended all love, power, wisdom, holiness, righteousness, pureness, truth, and goodness. God made man after his own image and so constructed him after his own moral likeness that he was capable of associating with, and being a companion to such a being as this.

However: When man transgressed the law of God, he yielded to another spirit besides that of God and received into his soul another likeness. Though he had been made with a nature that responded to the nature and attributes of God, sin erased that likeness from his soul and disfigured the image of God there and love gave way to selfishness, truth to error, righteousness to unrighteousness, and holiness to unholiness; and now there is a completely different and opposite likeness and spirit in man. Could we compare the features of the unsanctified soul today with those which it possessed in the creation, we would hardly be able to find any resemblance at all.

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In Gen. 5:3 it is recorded that Adam begat a son after his own likeness. He had now lost the likeness of God and had another likeness, and his children possessed his likeness instead of the likeness of God. All that were born into the world from that time on were born with that likeness or principle of sin in their hearts. In Psalms 51:5 the writer says, "I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." Again, the same writer said in Psalm 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray speaking lies as soon as they are born." These two texts clearly set forth the condition of every person that comes into the world. It explains to us some things that we merely call belonging to children when they act up as they ought not. It is not merely because there is some peculiar something that belongs to children that causes them to act up so many times, but it is that very principle or likeness of sin in the heart that is inherited by all. We watch our children many times and are made to wonder why it is so difficult to teach them the right and bring them up in the ways of the Lord. It is because there is in every one of them a very instinct or bent that attracts to the evil and to the world rather than to God and right. It seems that they always learn the evil so much quicker and easier than they learn the good. How quickly they learn to deceive. "They go astray speaking lies as soon as they are born." They soon learn to double up, scream, and cry as though in great misery when they want something, and to throw a fit when something does not go to suit them.

One minister was preaching along this line and telling how all children had that principle of sin in their hearts. A lady was sitting in the congregation with a small child. He pointed to her and said, "That little babe that you hold has this very thing I am talking about." She thought her babe was almost perfect and very much resented that reference to it, and told him so. Her remonstrance had

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hardly died away and the minister started on with his discourse when the babe decided that it wanted something that the mother did not want it to have. The child began to kick, squirm, and cry. The mother was trying her best to quiet it, but with very little success; and the minister stopped and said, “Just let the child go, sister, it can preach this better than I can.”

In Eph. 2:3 we read, “. . . and were by NATURE the children of wrath even as others.” Born within us all was a very nature of wrath. The very first man who came into the world after the fall of Adam and Eve, and was born after their likeness (Cain, their firstborn) and not after the likeness of God, rose up in wrath one day and slew his brother. As we look back over the history of man, we find the most outstanding characteristic to be SELFISHNESS, which, with its accompanying fruits of greed, covetousness, self-promotion and the pleasing of one’s self, has resulted in hatred, clash, confusion, strife, war, and destruction. These unhappy conditions are manifestly due to man’s nature and not to any combination of circumstances, else we would, no doubt, be able to find some period in history where this was not the case. From the time of Cain until now, though, no time can be found when such conditions did not exist. It is because man has this nature and, generally speaking, has never found the means of deliverance from it.

In Romans 5:12 Paul says, “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” This again proves that men are sinners by nature and have the principle born within them. They do not sin by mere chance, but there is something in them that causes them to do it.

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In Gen. 6:1 it is stated that God saw that the imaginations of men's HEARTS were only evil continually. Sin was not only being practiced among them, but it was in their hearts to devise wickedness. That was because of this principle of sin living in their hearts.

When man is born into the world with this nature instead of the pure nature of God in which he was created, he is already one step below the elevated plane of holiness in which the first man was created, before he has ever committed any wrong or become guilty of transgression before God. After the incident that had led to the arousing of Cain's anger, which resulted in the slaying of his brother, God met Cain and began to talk with him about the whereabouts of his brother, etc. In the course of the conversation, he said to Cain in Gen. 4:6b, 7, "Why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door door." This very sin principle or "Nature of wrath," which was in the heart of Cain from the likeness of his father, was crouched in his heart and at the opportune time sprang up to work destruction. It would appear that up to this time all had been going well with both Cain and Abel; but now, at this given signal from without, the principle that had been in his heart from his birth, that crouched monster of sin lying at the door taking occasion of the rejected sacrifice of Cain, pounced upon him and became active in the form of jealousy and hatred and worked destruction.

This same principle is crouching like a lion in every unsanctified soul and waiting for an opportunity to spring forth and become active. True, as long as we do well we are accepted, but if we do not well at any time the sin principle is lying crouched at the door ready to leap upon us and take advantage of our

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circumstances or provocations and attempt our destruction by trying to get us to become wrathful or angry and say or do something rash. You, no doubt, have had experiences in the unsanctified life when things did not go right or someone did not treat you right or did not talk right about you or to you and you felt something stirring within you and you felt like saying something unkind or felt a spirit of retaliation trying to assert itself in your soul. That is the very same thing that stirred in the heart of Cain which, when yielded to, wrought destruction of life. In the heart of every child this sin principle lies crouched and ready to spring forth, and when he comes to the years of accountability it becomes active to destroy his life (spiritual). Paul said in Romans 7:9, “For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came sin revived and I died.” At the opportune time the sin principle came out of its crouch and pounced upon him to destroy him.

In Heb. 12:1, we read, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the SIN [principle] which doth so easily beset us . . .” This sin principle is the “foe in the temple not subject to God,” and in many instances springs up unawares and asserts itself and upsets justified persons who still have him in their hearts. Oftentimes when one feels that everything is going well with him, then suddenly some provocation or temptation or test will come along and this thing within his heart rises up to stir in his soul to get him to say something unkind or act unkindly toward someone. Then he is upset and has a job of repenting on his hands, and confessions and apologies to make.

The sin principle is a regular spiritual fifth columnist. While we are justified before the Lord and our sins have been forgiven and we are striving with all our might to please him in all things,

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this fellow is all the while working to accomplish an inside job of betraying us into the hands of our enemy, the devil. You know how disastrous have been the activities of fifth columnists in the present conflict and how countries have been defeated by those within their own borders working in conjunction with the enemy which is coming against them from without. In one country, Norway, I believe, the German army just came in and took control with hardly a shot being fired. It was just handed over to them by fifth columnists within their own ranks. Sometimes we hear of bank robberies, etc. being pulled off with the aid of someone on the inside. It is quite an easy and comparatively safe task for robbers to rob a bank when they have inside help to arrange it for them. Not only is it easier and safer, but they usually get a bigger haul out of it. The inside help (fifth columnist) knows the time when the most money will be on hand, and he arranges to have as much of it as possible handy so it can be gotten quickly. It is exactly the same thing spiritually so long as the sin principle is in the heart. He is of such a nature that he responds to the character and attributes of the enemy rather than to God, and while the enemy is working against us from the outside he is busy setting up things on the inside in such a way that it will be easier and more convenient for the enemy to make a big haul and get us into a lot of trouble when the opportune time comes for him to attack us.

In Heb. 12:15 the writer is writing to brethren (saved people) and says, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness [this nature of wrath or sin principle] springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled." The enemy will try to get some bitterness in our hearts some way and the nature within the unsanctified soul is such as will respond to him and try to get us to receive the thing into our hearts. The devil will work on the outside to get someone to mistreat us or talk

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to us in a way that they ought not, then this thing on the inside will just rise up and say, “Now you just take it that way and get hurt about it and give them as good as they send; give them a good letting alone; get even with them;” etc. When a man is justified and not sanctified, it is a constant struggle against forces both within and without for him to keep from doing the thing that is wrong and failing of the grace of God.

Sin, then, is in the world in two forms. All men came into the world with this nature of sin, then when they came to the knowledge of right and wrong they went into wrong because of this sin nature and thus became sinners by practice. The practice of sin is what is referred to in the Word as “committed sin.” Jesus said, “Whosoever COMMITTETH sin is the servant of sin.”—John 8:34; and John said, “Whosoever COMMITTETH sin transgresseth also the law . . .”—1 John 3:4. These sins which we have committed are the ones we must confess and be forgiven for (1 John 1:9). On account of them we are commanded to repent. “Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions.”—Ezek. 18:30. When we have confessed the sins we have committed and repented of them, God for Christ’s sake forgives our sins and we stand justified before Him (Rom. 5:1) and acquitted of all guilt. But the nature in the heart that caused us to go wrong in the first place is still there. We could not repent of it because we were not responsible for it; neither could God forgive it because we never committed it. Oftentimes men are not even aware of it because when our sins are forgiven and we feel the kiss of pardoning love placed upon us by our heavenly Father, we feel so happy and free we do not feel that there is any need for any other work to be accomplished in our behalf. But since we have sin in two forms it must be destroyed in two forms. Since these two forms of sin differ from each other the means or method for destroying them must be

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different. Jesus saw the great need of his disciples being sanctified, and prayed that they might be—John 17:17-20. He commanded them to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high (were sanctified)—Luke 24:49.

Sanctification, A Second Work of Grace

Sanctification is a second definite work of grace wrought in the heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The disciples had their names written in heaven—Luke 20:20. They received power and authority over unclean spirits and diseases and were sent by Jesus to preach the Kingdom of God—Luke 9:1, 2. They had forsaken all to follow him—Matt. 19:29. They had kept the Word of God—John 17:6. They were not of the world even as Jesus was not of the world—John 17:14. Jesus recommended them unto the Father throughout his entire prayer in the 17th chapter of John. Surely no one would question their sins being forgiven, and yet the manifestations of something within, which was contrary to the nature of Christ, kept popping out occasionally. On one occasion it manifested itself in the ambition of two of his disciples who came desiring more prominent places than the rest, and then the jealousy that was manifest by the others on this occasion—Matt. 20:20-28. On one occasion they all were reasoning among themselves as to who would be greatest—Luke 9:46-48. On one occasion a desire for vengeance was manifested on their part because the people of a certain village had not received their master—Luke 9:54. Every manifestation of personal ambition, jealousy, vengeance, or attitude to take one's own part, or to get even, all strife, envy, selfishness, contention or division are fruits of the carnal nature. Jesus, knowing these things and the great handicap they would

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continually be under and the trouble that would surely eventually come because of this nature, prayed that they might be sanctified (John 17:17, 19) even though their committed sins had already been forgiven and they were not now committing sin, but these incidents all manifested something that would lead them into sin again, were it permitted to continue to live in their hearts.

The second Corinthian letter was addressed to saints and to the church of God and to brethren— 2 Cor. 1:1, 8. They were justified people and yet Paul expressed the desire to go to them that they might have a SECOND benefit (grace—margin) or be sanctified.

The Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed to “Holy Brethren” who were “partakers of the heavenly calling”—Heb. 3:1. They had come to a glorious, heavenly place and atmosphere and into a fellowship with saints and heavenly beings. Yea, they had come to Jesus—Heb. 12:22-24 and Heb. 10:32-34. Yet the entire epistle is an explanation of a deeper experience and an exhortation to “go on to perfection”— Heb. 6:1. But “He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified”—Heb. 10:14. Hence this deeper experience or second grace is sanctification.

The Thessalonian brethren were in a very healthy state spiritually, as is evidenced by the Apostle Paul’s letters to them. He first says he thanked God always for them when he remembered their state—1 Thess. 1:2, 3. Then he declared them to be examples to all saints; and they had, and manifested a faith that was spoken of in all parts—1 Thess. 1:7, 8. They had received the preaching of Paul as the Word of God and it had worked effectually in them—1 Thess. 2:13. They were his hope and crown of rejoicing—1 Thess. 2:19, 20. They followed a consistent policy of brotherly love—1 Thess. 4:9, 10. They were not in darkness but were children of light—1 Thess. 5:4, 5. Yet Paul reflected that

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there was a lack in their faith (1 Thess. 3:10) and declared unto them that the will of God was that they might be sanctified—1 Thess. 4:3.

Some often object that God does not do a half or part way work and that when he saves us and forgives our sins that he has completed the entire work of salvation in our case and there is nothing more to be done. However, we find at different times God has worked in this way. God could easily have spoken all things into existence at an instant that we have in the world, but he rather adopted a plan of taking six different days to do different parts of the creation. It was something progressive. Jesus could have opened the eyes of the blind man at once, but he rather chose to use a plan of two applications of clay—the first time the man saw men as trees walking and the second time he saw all things clearly—Mark 8:22-26. However, this is a different case in one particular respect. The justification of an individual and the forgiveness of one's sins is a complete operation—not just a half way work. All our sins are forgiven. Sanctification is also a separate and distinct work and yet complete. It is not two half way works, but it is two separate and distinct works and both complete. Each one is complete within itself and yet it takes both of them to make our salvation and redemption complete. Neither could we well be justified and sanctified at one time because one does not realize the presence of the carnal nature or need of its removal until it begins to stir in the heart and cause him difficulty. Then it is evident that this must be accomplished in our hearts subsequent to the repenting and forgiveness of sins.

The Destruction of the Carnal Nature in Sanctification

We have seen the entrance of the sin nature into the world and have taken note of its devastating effect and influence in the lives of all. Realizing that the nature is born in the heart of all and it always leads us into sin and wrong and that it will continue to cause us difficulty even in our Christian life so long as it continues to live in our hearts, it must be evident unto all that man's nature must be changed before he can do the will of God as God wanted him to. That is exactly what takes place in sanctification—the change of the inner nature. One who is sanctified is a “partaker of his divine nature”—2 Pet. 1:4. The old nature of sin is destroyed in the process of sanctification and the divine nature or likeness of God is reinstated in the heart. In Eph. 4:22-24 we read, “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man [carnal nature or sin principle] . . . and put on the new man [divine nature] which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” In Col. 3:9, 10 again we read, “. . . ye have put off the old man with his deeds [actual transgressions or committed sins] and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the IMAGE of him that created him.” (This is the image of God in which man was created and is now restored to him through sanctification). The words of David in Psa. 23:3 “He restoreth my soul” well sums up the glorious work of complete sanctification in restoring the soul to the image and likeness of God which was lost to all men by the

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transgression of our fore parents in Eden. In 2 Cor. 3:18, “But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image [the image of God] from glory [the first glory of justification in sins forgiven] to glory [the second glory of sanctification in the sin principle being destroyed and the divine nature implanted in the heart] as by the spirit of the Lord.” Note that all these texts set forth a change of condition and nature in the individual.

In Matt. 3:10, “And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees.” Just before this statement John the Baptist had been telling some to bring forth fruits meet for repentance, etc.; then said, “And now ALSO [That word “also” would signify something in addition to repentance and the things connected with it.] the ax is laid unto the root of the tree.” Up to the coming of Christ there was provision made according to the law for men to make certain sacrifices and their sins would be forgiven, but there was no power in these to reach the soul and effect any change there, so a remembrance of sins was made again every year—Heb. 10:3. They had just been pruning off the branches, but the root which brought forth the fruit, the real origin of the trouble (“a root of bitterness”—sin principle—Heb. 12:15) was not affected by this and continued to produce the fruits of sin and bitterness in their lives and sacrifices had to be made again and again in order for them to be forgiven. Jesus came striking right directly at the root (the principle of sin in the heart). “He suffered without the gate that he might sanctify [cleanse the heart from the sin nature] with his own blood”—Heb. 13:12. One can go out and cut sprouts all day, but if the roots are left they just produce another crop of sprouts and it is soon all to do over again. But if the roots are destroyed, it will not come with another crop of sprouts. So it is with the sin principle. If we must continually sin and repent, sin

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and repent, it is just the producing of more sprouts. But, thanks be unto God, there is a better and more victorious life than that for the children of God. Jesus came into the world for the express purpose of destroying the root or sin principle out of men's hearts and giving them a new heart and a new spirit and putting his spirit in them to cause them to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments and do them—Ezek. 36:25-27—so that not only are our sins forgiven, but the actual power of sin is destroyed out of the heart and life by the taking away of the carnal nature. Then “sin shall not have dominion over you [the power is broken] for you are not under the law but under grace.”—Rom. 6:14. Paul says in Rom. 6:6, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified [put to death] with him, that the body of sin [sin nature] might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Jesus “gave himself for us that he might REDEEM us . . .”—Titus 2:14. Now what does it mean to redeem a thing? Casually and generally we give the answer, “to buy back;” but when a thing is redeemed it is just as free from debt as it was before any debt was placed on it. Were you to borrow \$500.00 on your home and give a mortgage to cover the amount, you could not have that mortgage released when you had only paid \$450.00 or even \$475.00; but the full \$500.00 must be paid and the property just as free from debt as before the mortgage was placed on it. That is what it means to redeem. Paul said, “I am carnal, sold under sin”—Rom. 7:14. Why was he “sold under sin”? His own answer was because “I am carnal.” In other words, he possessed from infancy and by inheritance a carnal nature which gave the devil an advantage and a mortgage on his soul. For the same reason the devil has a mortgage on every soul. The sin nature gives him that advantage. Then to merely forgive one's sins, which is the fruit of this root, would not be full redemption, for the carnality that sold us under sin and placed us

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under mortgage to the devil is still in the heart. The good news that I bring to you is that Christ paid the full debt and fully redeems the souls of his people and so completely destroys the sin nature and restores the nature of God to the soul by his sanctifying grace that man is just as free from sin, not only in practice, but also in nature as he was when God first made him in his own image. That is complete redemption.

But, some question, if the carnal nature is actually removed, how could it ever get back into one's heart again? They reason that it is not destroyed but merely subdued. The carnal nature is not destroyed out of the world, but only out of those hearts that are yielded to God. That principle still accompanies sin in every form and in every place it is found and if one yields to sin again after they have been delivered from it they admit that principle right back into their heart.

Requirements and Conditions for Sanctification

There are two parts to sanctification: We have a part in setting ourselves apart for sacred use, and God has a part in thoroughly cleansing the heart from the sin nature and filling us with the Holy Ghost to enable us to do his work as he wants us to.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”—Rom 12:1, 2. We see here that this offering is to be a “LIVING SACRIFICE.” God is looking for those who will live for HIM and not THEMSELVES, and will glorify GOD in their body and spirit which are his (1 Cor. 6:20). We present ourselves in repentance once, unclean, unholy, and in sin. Then God forgave us of our sins and took away our guilt and we began to live for him. Now we present ourselves in an altogether different condition—HOLY. The first time we came to the Lord, we were full of the world and the love of the world, but as he saved us he transferred our affections from the world to himself and now we come presenting ourselves, not being conformed to the world, but transformed and separate from it. All this is done to “prove what is

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that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” and “This is the will of God, even your sanctification”—1 Thess. 4:3. We are not responsible for the carnal nature, hence cannot repent of it, but we must acknowledge its existence within us and reach the place where we loath it and refuse it the right to abide in our hearts and consecrate ourselves before the Lord to permit him to remove it that we henceforth should not live unto ourselves but unto him who died for us—2 Cor. 5:15. Our bodies and all are turned over unreservedly unto God for his Holy Spirit to take charge of and use as he sees fit. In justification we forsake sin, the world, and all evil things. In sanctification we forsake ourselves. One who is justified is dead to sin. One who is sanctified is also dead to self. The seeds of sin find a very fertile seed bed in SELF. That is the carnal nature—to please one’s self instead of God. In the process of sanctification that nature is removed and the Holy Spirit fills our souls with the divine nature which is to please God and not OURSELVES. The Apostle Paul said, “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me.” This signifies the death of the carnal nature which is steeped in selfishness and egotism. Christ suffered without the gate that he might sanctify the people with his own blood— Heb. 13:12—and Paul had gone forth to him without the camp (Heb. 13:13) and actually permitted the same thing to happen to him in spirit that happened there to Jesus in the flesh. He had committed himself to the death of the self life and all that was within him that was contrary to God and godliness. Everything that had been gain to him in a worldly way and in his self life, he permitted to be removed from him that Christ might be enthroned within. “I am crucified” the “I” with all its selfish purposes and personal ambitions was forever put away from him and he testified from henceforth: “For me to live is Christ.”

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When one is sanctified, the “I” is gone. It is no longer then “I” but CHRIST; and not MINE, but CHRIST’S. We are his and all we have is his. A clear example of this is found in the case of the early disciples at Jerusalem. When they were filled with the Holy Ghost (sanctified) they were all of one heart and one soul and none of them said that the things they possessed were their own, but they sold their possessions and made distribution to those who had need. I do not say that all who receive the Holy Ghost today will sell all their possessions as these did; but I do say that they will begin right away to use them for the glory of God and the promotion of his cause instead of consuming them all upon themselves, and their affections and desires will be quickly loosened from the things of this world and set on things above just as theirs were.

Now read Rom. 5:1-5. We see here that two graces or experiences are spoken of. He first says “Therefore being JUSTIFIED by faith;” then he speaks of another grace: “By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand.” This second grace, “STANDING GRACE” (sanctification) then, is entered into by faith. To obtain it, one must have that living, definite faith in God that counts God faithful and “that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”—Heb. 11:6. When we have made a complete consecration of ourselves and all to God, then we must believe that God accepts our sacrifice and sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, accomplishing the complete eradication of the sin principle and filling the heart with divine love.

In 1 John 1:7 we read: “If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from ALL SIN” (in nature as well as practice). In order to be eligible for this glorious experience of

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complete sanctification, one must be walking in all the light he has and be altogether clear with God in as far as he knows. When one is committing sin by failing to walk in the light, he needs to repent and be forgiven of those sins before he can receive the Holy Spirit.

One who is justified is holy; one who is sanctified is “PERFECTED IN HOLINESS”—2 Cor. 7:1. In other words, the justified person is holy in practice or life, not committing sin; but the sanctified person is holy in nature, having had the sin nature destroyed out of his heart.

At first thought, some are tempted to feel that the complete surrender of ourselves to God is too great a sacrifice. Yet Jesus gave his all for us, and, in all fairness, we should count it only a “Reasonable Service” to give ourselves to him. It could not be unfair for him to have possession of that which he has purchased with his own life’s blood. There has never been a selfish person who was happy. Such people do not even make good neighbors or citizens, let alone good Christians. The reason is obvious. Man was so constructed that he could only be happy in the will of God. Something in him yearns after God. A godly and heavenly atmosphere is his natural realm. Out of such surroundings he is just as unhappy and dissatisfied as the fish out of water, and for the same reason. As one has said, “My soul was made for thee, oh God! and will not rest until it rests in thee.” But when we just fully turn ourselves over to God to do his will and serve others that he might be glorified, we will fully realize the truth of the words of Jesus: “Whosoever will save his life [the self life that seeks to please one’s self and gratify the flesh] shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life [that is, deny himself and forsake fleshly desires and personal ambition] for my sake shall find it.” In other words, the surrendered life is the real, true life, and when we have found

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the secret of complete submission and surrender to God we have just then found the way of the “more abundant” life and the source of true happiness and pleasure in this world.

The Sanctified Experience

Sanctification is a grace that affects the inner man in such a way that his affections are alienated from the love of the world and exalted to a supreme love of God. The sanctified person loves the Lord with his whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”—Rom. 5:5. When we receive the Holy Spirit and he sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts, then “our love is made perfect”—1 John 4:17. In such a state of divine love (perfect love) there is no place for the least bit of anything contrary to love itself. Hence we are able to love our enemies—Matt. 5:44. We could not hate, despise or hold contempt toward him because “perfect love” is shed abroad in our heart, leaving no place for such principles to live. In this condition we can do good to those who hate us, etc.—Matt. 5:44. We could not well do otherwise for “love worketh no ill to his neighbor.”—Rom. 13:10. Since the heart is full of that thing that “worketh no ill,” there is no place left in our being for that principle to operate that does work ill. The “love of God” loved its enemies and those who were ungodly and sacrificed to the limit for them. This characteristic of divine love is not changed in coming from God into our own soul.

Sanctification is also the perfecting of holiness in us. “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves

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from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God” —2 Cor. 7:1. Here a “perfect holiness” is referred to but “He has perfected forever them that are sanctified”—Heb. 10:14. Hence we can only reach the experience of 2 Cor. 7:1 through sanctifying grace.

At this juncture some will ask: “If we are ‘perfected forever’ how then would it ever be possible for us to sin again?” There is no part of salvation even in its most complete form that takes away man’s free moral agency, deprives him of his right of choice and reduces him to the state of a mere machine. In the sanctified experience we receive an abundance of power over sin; but if we choose to return to the life from which we have been perfectly and completely delivered, it will be with us according to 2 Pet. 2:20-22, but we have the right to go back nevertheless. As to the question that is often asked: “Can one sin and not lose their sanctification?—we say that when one has committed a willful, knowing sin against God, they not only lose their sanctification but their justification as well and are reduced to the dead state in sin (“When sin is finished [or committed] it bringeth forth death”—James 1:15) and they must repent and do their first works—Rev. 2:5, and come all the way back over the same route they did before. However one may be in fault without knowledge and it not be imputed to them. In John 3:19 Jesus said, “This is the condemnation that light is come . . .” Condemnation does not come until light or knowledge has come to the heart. When knowledge comes to us, on the particular thing wherein we might be at fault, if we correct the fault immediately, we will escape the condemnation and go right on living without blame before God. If we still persist in the thing after knowledge has come, then it is imputed to us, salvation is lost and death comes to the soul. Some being farther advanced in the Christian life and having more light and

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understanding than others sometimes see such faults in others and condemn them and question their experience, their integrity, and sincerity, while God seeing the lack of understanding in their hearts does not charge it against them. After all, the Christian life is very much a matter of walking in light and requires a strict honesty and open heart on the part of all. It is true that the Holy Ghost guides into all truth, but one does not reach the full understanding of all truth at once. As we walk in the light we have, more will be given. “The path of the just is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.”—Prov. 4:18. It increases as we follow on to know the Lord. Hence we see that though one who is sanctified is, in a sense, “perfected forever” yet that experience does not mark the end of all growth and development for him by any means. Of the work of salvation it is the full completion, to be sure. It is a thorough and complete cleansing of the soul, and one will never be more pure and holy in heart in heaven than he is in sanctification. In this sense he is “perfected forever.” But in regard to his spiritual growth, his work for God, his ability to carry the burdens and responsibilities, and his power to overcome temptation, he is only well begun. One is really just getting ready to grow when he receives the Holy Spirit, because he is the one who gives him understanding. Read John 14:26; 15:26; 16:13; and 1 Cor. 2:9-16. The exhortation to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ” has no end nor completeness. So long as we continue to live and walk with God, I am sure we shall continue to increase in the knowledge of him and his truth. Never let the enemy impose on you the idea that there is no more to be done, nor any advancement to be made, nor any foes or temptations to meet after you are sanctified. The Israelites met the most formidable of all their foes in the Canaan land, which is typical of sanctification. You, too,

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will meet formidable foes and strong trials after you enter the spiritual land of Canaan, but the power of God will be increased within you that you will be able to overcome always and even call them “light afflictions” as did the Apostle Paul. You are just letting yourself in for a prolific growth, expansion and increase of power and glory in the soul when you surrender yourself and all into God’s hands and let him sanctify you.

I want to refer again to those words of the Apostle Paul, “These light afflictions,” to introduce another thought regarding the sanctified life—that of power. We realize to the full when we read of his afflictions that they were very heavy and difficult to bear for the human power alone. Then there must surely have been present within him an abundance of divine power which made the load seem light to him. Indeed, it was the divine power of the Spirit instead of the human power of Paul carrying the load. Such may look difficult to us, but we find the glory and power of Christ resting upon him and his faithfulness and patience in suffering turning to the salvation of men on every hand and in every walk of life. Are we willing to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3) that we might have the same results?

But this power is closely connected with our receiving the Holy Ghost—being sanctified. Jesus said, “But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses of me . . .”—a glorious, divine, holy, righteous power to enable you to witness for him, to live for him, to bear the fruits of the Spirit, and to overcome every trial and opposition and temptation of the enemy: a sublime power to remain calm and trust in him through all the pressures and stress and strain of life. The Word of God says, “When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him”—Isa. 59:19.

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When you see the waves rolling high and the tempests strong, you need not fear if you have the Spirit of God within, for He will lift up the standard at the proper time and stop the raging of the tempest. For He says again, “When thou passest through the waters they shall not overflow thee and when thou passest through the fire thou shalt not be burned,” etc.—Isa. 41:1-5. The sanctified person, with that spirit of power and grace within, is able to dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in quiet resting places (Isa. 32:18) though the storms may beat vehemently against him and the floods descend upon him for he rests secure in knowing the spirit of the Lord is within to lift up the standard against the enemy.

Now with the thought of power still in mind, let us turn to those texts which refer to the Holy Spirit as “The Comforter.” Read John 14:15-18; 14:26, 27; 15:26; and 16:7-11. The word “comfort” is a compound word composed of the Latin prefix “com” meaning with, and the Latin word “forte” meaning strength or to be strengthened. Literally being interpreted, then, to be comforted is to be strengthened by being with. After all, what is comfort as we know it, but a certain power or ability of mental and spiritual faculties to look through and beyond present woes and distresses of whatever nature, and see by faith better, more favorable conditions coming to us? Paul expressed the thought I have in mind when he said, “We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen”—2 Cor. 4:18. But from whence cometh this super human power and strength of our faculties to do this? It comes only from God who is the source of all power and only as we are able to contact him are we able to do this. That, then, is the work of the Holy Spirit in his capacity as “The Comforter”—to continually bring our mental and spiritual powers and faculties into contact with the heavenly, the divine; in short, with God himself, that that divine power might flow from

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him into our being through the Spirit. I shall again refer you to the word of God to bring out the point more clearly. “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his SPIRIT in the inner man . . .”—Eph. 3:16-19. We see here that this strength, might, and power of spiritual comprehension all come to us through the Holy Spirit. How badly every Christian needs him in his heart!

A striking contrast between the weakness of man and the power of the Spirit is seen in comparing the conditions of the Apostles before and after Pentecost; in their justified state before, and in their sanctified state afterward. When they had not the power of mental and spiritual faculties to see beyond the present distress, they were weak indeed: Peter denied the Lord in the face of a servant maid, and all the others fled in confusion upon Christ’s arrest. But on the day of Pentecost, when they were filled with the Holy Ghost and by him comforted and strengthened to see spiritual things and eternal prizes to such an extent that they no longer feared those who could kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, (Matt. 10:28) these same men stood right up in the face of the enemies of Christ and boldly preached Christ unto them and declared unto them that they themselves with their own hands had been his murderers. Not only did they speak boldly, but with such power that those who heard them were pricked in their hearts and began to inquire the way of salvation. Ah! Dear ones, if you would have that convincing force and melting power in your life and in your words to pierce through the hardened outer crust of men’s hearts and penetrate to the more tender inner parts of the heart and win them to Christ, you must be filled with the Holy Spirit in your heart to furnish the driving power for those words.

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In the 4th chapter of Acts it is recorded of some 5000 (verse 4) that “when they had prayed the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and they spake the Word of God with boldness”—Acts 4:31. “And with great power gave the Apostles witness . . .”—Acts 4:33. Oh! for the day when the entire company of believers shall be sanctified wholly and filled with the Holy Ghost, and be able to produce spiritual earthquakes that will shake men’s souls to the very foundation and God’s people shall be able to give witness to the things pertaining to God with great power. Then “sinners shall not stand in the congregation of the righteous,” etc.

Now let us notice one more thought concerning power and strength and how necessary it is from that standpoint for God’s people to be sanctified. In Rev. 12:1 the Church of God is compared to a woman clothed with the sun, etc. In verse 2 we find that this woman was with child, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. In verse 5 we find that she brought forth a man child. This picture represents the early church and her burden for souls and the bringing forth of the 3000 souls on the day of Pentecost. In every case where a child is born, there is travail. It has been the happy privilege of God’s people through the years to carry that burden for souls and to travail in birth spiritually until sons and daughters were born into the family of God. Now we are down to the point and let us get it well. We know that it takes a full grown, fully developed woman to bring forth healthy children into the world. It is the same with the church, if her spiritual children be normal and healthy. Those who are only justified are in the child state spiritually. Those who are sanctified have the divine graces developed to a sufficient degree that they are represented as coming to age or being grown. Therefore, I believe you can readily see the great necessity of a sanctified church and sanctified people

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for this very important work of bringing new children into the family of God. God speaks in the 66th chapter of Isaiah of bringing to the birth and not being able to bring forth. It is surely a sad condition when God's people are not sufficiently developed in Him to bring forth into a good spiritual experience when the soul is there to be brought forth. Oh! if you would have power to make the heavy afflictions seem light, if you would have power to witness for him, to live for him and bear the fruits of the Spirit, if you would have power to create spiritual earthquakes and shake the soul of the sinner to its very foundation, if you would have that all glorious power to travail in birth until sons and daughters be born into Christ through you, then quickly renounce everything that be of self, completely surrender all to him and consecrate to let him destroy that self life and purge you through and through and then fill you with the Holy Ghost for "you shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

One who is justified has life—read John 5:25. Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life"—John 10:10. Then immediately following the sanctified experience is expressed in these words of Jesus in the same verse, "and that they might have it more abundantly." Sanctification is the "more abundant" life—such an abundant and expansive and glorious life as was expressed by Jesus in John 7:38, when he said, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Oh! to think—rivers of it! But "This spake he of the spirit"—John 7:39. Only those who are filled with the Holy Ghost can enjoy such an abundant life. Jesus again said, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4:14. From the sanctified heart filled

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with the Holy Ghost, the love of God and the vigor and vitality of eternal life becomes a regular geyser in the soul.

Jesus said, “Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth [cleanses, purifies, SANCTIFIES] that it may bring forth more fruit”—John 15:2; not a different kind, but more fruit of the same kind. A sanctified person is able to bear much more of the spiritual fruit than the justified person.

We get a very beautiful comparison of the work of sanctification in the resurrection of Lazarus. When Jesus stood and called him, he came forth from the grave a living creature. Life was there all right, but he did not have free use of himself for he was bound with grave clothes and a napkin about his head. Then Jesus issued a second command: “Loose him and let him go.” Oh, the glorious liberty and freedom of that second experience! One comes forth unto life when he is justified, but in many instances he is hampered, hindered, and bound by timidity, fear of man, and other things, from using himself freely for God; but when he is sanctified and the Holy Ghost has loosed him from those things and let him go by empowering and embolding him, how free he feels!

In Conclusion

It requires all the three agents of God—the WORD, the BLOOD, and the HOLY SPIRIT—all acting together to accomplish the work of sanctification. In the 17th chapter of John, Jesus said, “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” In Rom. 15:16 Paul said, “That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” In the 13th chapter of Hebrews, we read, “Wherefore, also, Christ, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood suffered without the gate.” We see, then, that it is accomplished THROUGH the truth, WITH the blood, and BY the Holy Spirit. In other words, the blood of Christ is the cleansing element involved—“The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin,” and “unto him who washed us from our sins in his own blood.” The Holy Spirit is the agent that applies this element to the heart, then he himself fills the soul that is thus made pure and clean and abides there forever. The Word is the means by which we are instructed in the ways of truth and righteousness. By it we are taught and made to understand that such a state of grace as we understand sanctification to be, is our privilege to obtain; that it is not only our privilege, but that it is our duty to attain to such a condition and acquire such a grace. We are made to understand by the Word that it is the will of God that we have this experience. We are instructed in the Word just how to make a complete surrender of ourselves and all to the Lord and to

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present our bodies a living sacrifice to God and that this is only a reasonable service for us to render. Then we are taught how that when this is done we may exercise faith and believe that God accepts such a complete sacrifice and sends the Holy Spirit into our souls when we ask him for him. Thus, you can easily see the part the BLOOD, the WORD, and the HOLY SPIRIT all have to do in the process of sanctifying, also the part that we have to do in it. We see the all glorious results of such an experience in the heart. We understand the great need of this experience to empower us and to equip us for service that God might be glorified in us. Therefore, let us with all haste and energy “GO ON TO PERFECTION.”

Ostis B. Wilson, Jr.

